

LIFE-SAVING STATIONS UPON THE ATLANTIC AND GULF COASTS.

MAY 27, 1898.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. MANN, from the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 10525.]

The Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, to whom was referred House Document No. 496, have considered the same and report the accompanying bill (H. R. 10525) with the recommendation that it do pass.

The purpose of the bill is explained by the annexed letters from the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of the Navy.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., May 24, 1898.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a letter signed by the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, dated the 19th instant, and addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, inclosing a copy of a letter of the Secretary of the Navy, dated May 18, addressed to the Secretary of the Treasury, both relating to the importance of keeping open and manned the life-saving stations upon the Atlantic and Gulf coasts during the war, as important adjuncts to the coast signal service, and recommending legislation granting authority of law for the employment of life-saving crews at these stations during the months of June and July, 1898.

It appears from the records of this Department that the original letter of the Acting Secretary above referred to, with its inclosure, was duly mailed, but, it is learned, has failed to reach its destination.

Respectfully, yours,

L. J. GAGE,
Secretary.

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., May 19, 1898.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith copy of a letter from the honorable Secretary of the Navy, dated the 18th instant, strongly urging that the crews of the life-saving stations along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts be kept on duty during the war as important adjuncts to the coast signal service established along those coasts.

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I heartily concur in the recommendations contained in the letter, but there is no authority of law for the employment of these crews during the months of June and July. I would therefore recommend that Congress enact the necessary legislation for the employment of the crews during the two months named.

A draft of a bill for this purpose is herewith respectfully submitted.

Respectfully, yours,

O. L. SPAULDING, *Acting Secretary.*

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *Washington, May 18, 1898.*

SIR: Capt. John R. Bartlett, United States Navy, superintendent of the coast signal service, reports to me that a complete system of observation is established along the entire Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States, and that the coast signal service is thus fully in operation.

This is effected through the cooperation of the keepers of all light-houses, crews of the life-saving stations, observers of the Weather Bureau, and connection by telephone and telegraph wires of the several services and the Western Union Telegraph to headquarters, Navy Department.

A very important adjunct of this service is the patrol by the crews of the life-saving stations along the coast, filling in gaps between light-houses and coast signal stations. Captain Bartlett has called my attention to the fact that under existing law the crews of the life-saving stations will be laid off during the months of June and July. The coast signal service would be greatly crippled thereby.

The coast signal service is of such importance that in order to maintain its efficiency I earnestly request that immediate steps be taken to obtain the necessary authority of law to have the crews of the life-saving stations—or half crews—kept on duty during the war. With regard to the question whether provision should be made for full or half complement, it is suggested that the Superintendent of the Life-Saving Service be consulted.

As a special act of Congress with an extra appropriation making provision for pay of crews would appear to be necessary, the urgent need of prompt action will be apparent.

Very respectfully,

JOHN D. LONG,
Secretary.

The SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

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